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NY Times Op-Ed Columnist Addresses 2019 UNH Commencement

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NY Times Op-Ed Columnist Addresses 2019
UNH Commencement

Saturday, May 18, 2019

(HTTPS://WWW.NYT.COM/2019/05/18/nytimes-unh-commencement-2019)
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DURHAM, N.H.—“The biggest crisis of today is the crisis of connection, the crisis of social fragmentation,” University of New Hampshire commencement speaker David Brooks told graduates at the university’s commencement held Saturday, May 18, 2019. Brooks called on the more than 2,500 undergraduate and 547 graduate students — including 69 veterans, active military, National Guard and reservists — representing 44 states and 31 foreign countries who received degrees to lead a cultural revolution.

“I spend a lot of time on college campuses and I see it happening,” the journalist and political commentator said. “I see 10 times more passion than I saw a decade ago. I see a generation that



DAVID BROOKS, JOURNALIST AND POLITICAL COMMENTATOR, DELIVERED THE SPEECH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE COMMENCEMENT SATURDAY, MAY 18, 2019, IN DURHAM.
CREDIT: UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

realizes that every action you take is ethical. Every action you take either lifts somebody else, or hurts someone else. When I go on campus, I see students embracing community.”

Brooks urged the graduates to lead with vulnerability. “Vulnerability is the only way we build relationship and relationship is the only engine of change. The second thing I ask you to do is to weave—weave relationship together...the best way to weave is through aggressive friendship. If you embrace aggressive friendship, you’ll be the one who organizes the summer barbecue on your street.”

“Some generations are called to fight wars against foreign foes...which can lead to victory. Your generation is called to see and know people who are different from you, to dance on the beach with them, to play Wiffle ball in the backyard with them, to drink a little too much with them and maybe tell funny embarrassing stories with them; it is to understand them deeply and give them a hug. Your generation is called to live emotionally open in a time of hostility. That sounds like a pretty good life to me.”

In his welcoming remarks to graduates, their families and commencement guests, UNH President James W. Dean, Jr. reminded them of the great things they accomplished in and outside of the classroom.

“As you pursued your degrees, you did so in ways that connected your skills with your passions,” he said. “You helped to build a better campus climate, you improved the quality of life across New Hampshire and you contributed to making a better world. You learned how to work on teams. You recognized the value of being friendly, open-minded and welcoming—and inviting diverse people and diverse perspectives into your day-to-day lives and work. Those are great, important skills that will last you a lifetime.”

Arthur Bean, retired New Hampshire Superior Court Justice and World War II veteran, received the Granite State Award (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XM6CkouBnQ8&feature=youtu.be>) for his outstanding contributions to the state. He was also awarded an honorary bachelor's degree, having left UNH one semester shy of a degree to join the Army Air Corps in 1940.

Bean who recently celebrated his 100th birthday, attended UNH from 1936 to 1940. As a B-17 bomber pilot, he led 29 missions over Germany, and was part of the first wave of bombers when the 8th Air Force launched its 1,300-aircraft assault on Berlin in March 1945. After earning his law degree from Boston University, Bean was an assistant attorney general in the state before opening his own law practice. Named to the N.H. Superior Court in the 1970s, he retired from the bench in 1988, but still worked as a mediator and arbitrator, participating in over 700 cases and working into his 80s.

Along with Brooks, Julie Palais '78 was awarded an honorary degree for her contributions to climate change research studying volcanic fallout in ice cores from both Greenland and Antarctica. For more than 26 years she served as program director of the Antarctic glaciology program at the National Science Foundation's Division of Polar Programs. She made 28 trips to Antarctica and three trips to Greenland to understand the history and dynamics of the Antarctic and Greenland ice sheets. Palais Glacier and Palais Bluff are two features in Antarctica which have been named in her honor and in 2017 the International Glaciological Society awarded her the Richardson Medal for “insightful and steadfast service to the U.S. and international glaciological and ice core science communities by enabling discoveries that have impacted the course of climate science and enlightened understanding of the important role of glaciology and the polar regions in global climate change.”

The University of New Hampshire inspires innovation and transforms lives in our state, nation and world. More than 16,000 students from all 50 states and 71 countries engage with an award-winning faculty in top-ranked programs in business, engineering, law, health and human services, liberal arts and the sciences across more than 200 programs of study. As one of the nation's highest-performing research universities, UNH partners with NASA, NOAA, NSF and NIH, and receives more than \$110 million in competitive external funding every year to further explore and define the frontiers of land, sea and space.

Editor's Notes:

Photographs available to download: <https://www.unh.edu/unhtoday/gallery/unh-commencement-2019-press-release-images>
([//www.unh.edu/unhtoday/gallery/unh-commencement-2019-press-release-images](https://www.unh.edu/unhtoday/gallery/unh-commencement-2019-press-release-images))

Caption 1: David Brooks, journalist and political commentator, delivered the speech at the University of New Hampshire commencement Saturday, May 18, 2019, in Durham.

Credit: University of New Hampshire Communications and Public Affairs

Caption 2: President James W. Dean, Jr. addresses the University of New Hampshire commencement Saturday, May 18, 2019, in Durham.

Credit: University of New Hampshire Communications and Public Affairs

Caption 3: More than 2,500 undergraduate and 547 graduate students received degrees at the University of New Hampshire's commencement ceremonies Saturday, May 18, 2019.

Credit: University of New Hampshire Communications and Public Affairs

Caption 4: More than 2,500 undergraduate and 547 graduate students received degrees at the University of New Hampshire's commencement ceremonies Saturday, May 18, 2019.

Credit: University of New Hampshire Communications and Public Affairs

David Brooks remarks (<https://www.unh.edu/main/durham-commencement-2019-david-brooks-address>)

President James W. Dean, Jr. remarks (<https://www.unh.edu/main/president-dean-durham-commencement-address-2019>)

May 2019 Graduates ([//www.unh.edu/unhtoday/news/release/2019/05/16/university-new-hampshire-announces-may-2019-graduates](https://www.unh.edu/unhtoday/news/release/2019/05/16/university-new-hampshire-announces-may-2019-graduates))

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